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French leak Soviet papers detailing technology thefts

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Confidential Soviet documents detailing the Kremlin's success in clandestinely acquiring Western technology for military use were leaked to the press by French authorities over the weekend.

While the documents are causing a sensation in France, intelligence officials here are calling the revelations just "the tip of the iceberg" in Moscow's overall efforts to acquire Western technology overtly and covertly.

The documents state the Soviet Union's Ministry of Aviation Industry saved about \$256 million by obtaining advanced Western technology between 1976 and 1980 to help solve its design and construction problems.

This represents only a small part of the overall effort made by Soviet intelligence services and the Kremlin's science and technology institutions, according to U.S. officials and other sources.

Such clandestine efforts by the KGB and its military counterpart, the GRU, represent "a major problem," Attorney General Edwin Meese III told The Washington Times.

"We know that a great deal of technological advance by the Soviet military has been a result of stolen technological data from the United States," he said.

The Soviet espionage apparatus has "mounted an increasingly intensive intelligence effort" to acquire Western military secrets, Mr. Meese added.

The Soviet documents leaked by the French discuss Soviet effectiveness in obtaining technical information through "special channels" in the West.

"The positive experience we have had from abroad has allowed us to proceed in a manner favorable to our country in perfecting new, higher level technology, and this in a very short time," one Soviet document states.

The documents report Moscow saved about \$60 million in research costs in 1979 alone — a major

increase over the \$22 million saved in 1978.

One document says the Ministry of Aviation Industry acquired and studied 156 "samples" and 3,896 documents from abroad. Of these, 87 samples and 346 documents had been adapted to military use.

Of material acquired through "special channels," the documents state that 61.5 percent originally came from the United States, 10.5 percent from West Germany, 8 percent from France, 7.5 percent from Britain, 3 percent from Japan and the remainder from other sources.

The reports state the Soviets used the stolen data to accelerate construction of jet fighters, including the MiG-25, the Su-27 and the Su-25.

Weapons aiming systems aboard jet fighters were improved by studying Western mounting procedures, the report said. In another case, the Soviets saved time and money in analyzing problems of air flow and wind resistance for the Su-25 because comparable Western studies were available.

According to the most recent version of "Soviet Military Power," released by the Pentagon this week, Soviet industrial modernization pro-

grams "are supported by an elaborate network for the collection of foreign scientific and technological information."

Prime importance is given to computers and electronics, the report states, and KGB and GRU agents "are targeted against Western sources for these critical technologies to determine exactly where and how the hardware and software can be acquired."

According to an earlier CIA report on Soviet technology acquisition, the Soviets and their East bloc allies have been so successful that "several thousand" technology collection officers are stationed throughout the world "under various covers ranging from diplomats to journalists to trade officials."

Details of this acquisition network were revealed when the West German Interior Ministry announced in January it had

obtained a copy of the highly classified Soviet directory of desired Western technology.

Euphemistically called the "Red Book" by Western officials, the telephone book-sized handbook is officially titled, "Coordinated Requirements for Technological Information Missions." The directory lists thousands of target technologies — equipment and documents — to be obtained from the West.

Top priorities are given to guid-

ance and sensor technologies for missiles. Radar technology, rocket designs, advanced anti-tank and air-defense technology are of great interest.

Directory chapters list "innocent" or non-critical technologies such as diesel engine designs that are needed and can be applied for military purposes.

The CIA report and other documents outline a pervasive KGB structure geared to acquire Western technology. Each year, officials of the 12 Soviet ministries for military-related industries prepare lists of specific Western technologies needed.

The most important requests are forwarded to the Committee for Military Industry (VPK), chaired by Leonid Smirnov, a deputy chairman of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers.

The VPK prepares the overall plans for acquisition with the State Committee on Science and Technology (GKNT). It coordinates the acquisition effort, through legal and illegal means. The GKNT has the authority to call upon the KGB, GRU, Ministry of Foreign Trade and the Soviet Academy of Science to acquire the requested technologies and information.

Various scientific and technical institutes under the Soviet Academy of Science often can obtain documents and data through scientific and academic exchange programs

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and through attending seminars and trade expositions in the West.

The GRU, according to the reports, specializes in Western military secrets and arranging illegal transfers to the Soviet Union.

The KGB, largest of the intelligence services, devotes much of its attention to illegally acquiring embargoed Western technology through export diversion, use of dummy front corporations and smuggling. Its Directorate T employs thousands of scientific and technical officers to comb Western publications and data bases for usable material.

The U.S. government's National Technical Information Service makes available annually tens of thousands of unclassified and previously classified research studies performed by federal contractors and others.

Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige recently charged that the Soviets have obtained critical technology secrets through NTIS's "massive giveaway program."

A review of NTIS subject areas shows the following technologies are available for the asking: electronic and acoustic countermeasures, anti-aircraft defense systems, antisubmarine warfare, chemical, biological and radiological weapons, military intelligence, nuclear warfare, missile tracking systems and nuclear explosions and devices.